

Message Text

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64

ACTION OC-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CCO-00 SY-05 /022 W

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R 171313Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2330

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL KARACHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 8494

KARACHI FOR RSS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, LE

SUBJECT: TRIP REPORT: PERSONNEL POUCH EXCHANGE NOV 16, 1976

REF: BEIRUT 8451

1. BEIRUT PERSONNEL/POUCH EXCHANGE CONVOY DEPARTED CHANCERY AT 0630 (BEIRUT TIME) AND PROCEEDED VIA CORNICHE MAZRAA THROUGH THE MUSEUM CROSS OVER POINT TO THE BEIRUT/DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL HIGHWAY TO MASNAA WITHOUT INCIDENT. AFTER SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING PERSONNEL AND POUCH EXCHANGE, BEIRUT CONVOY RETURNED VIA THE SAME ROUTE ALSO WITHOUT INCIDENT.

2. ASF TROOPS WERE OBSERVED STATIONED ALONG THE CORNICHE MAZRAA AND A STRONG CONCENTRATION OF TROOPS, TANKS, AND OTHER ARMORED VEHICLES WERE IN PLACE BETWEEN BARBIR HOSPITAL AND THE MUSEUM. OUTGOING THE ASF WAS OPERATING ONE CHECKPOINT; ON RETURN THEY WERE OPERATING SEVERAL, MAINLY FOR HEAVY VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC.

3. ON THE DAMASCUS ROAD ASF FORCES WERE ENCAMPED AT A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT LOCATIONS. THESE POSITIONS APPEARED VERY TEMPORARY, HOWEVER, AS SOLDIERS WERE SEEN SLEEPING IN THE VEHICLES AND NO TENTS WERE OBSERVED, EXCEPT IN ALEY. ON OUR RETURN TRIP, THESE ENCAMPMENTS WERE JUST BEGINNING TO BECOME ACTIVE.

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4. CONVOY RETURNED TO CHANCERY AT 0950 (BEIRUT TIME) AND WOULD

HAVE MADE IT SOONER BUT FOR HEAVY CIVILIAN TRAFFIC ON DAMASCUS
ROAD INTO BEIRUT.
LANE

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